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This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen – Tadeusz Borowski

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Author:

Collection of short stories published in 1947 based on the poet's experience as a prisoner in Nazi death camps

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**Tadeusz
Borowski**

The book of stories about life in Auschwitz was originally published as **Pożegnanie z Marią / Farewell to Maria**. The English edition was first published in 1951. The majority of the stories are written from the perspective of a concentration camp prisoner, describing the terrors, abuse from the guards and also the poisonous relationships between the prisoners themselves. The stories carry a bleak, desperate feeling throughout and avoid passing judgment on even the most cruel choices and actions of its characters. The book has a deep impact on readers, drawing them into the hopeless, tragic world where compassion no longer has a place among human and atrocity becomes routine. The collection is considered a masterpiece of Polish and world literature.

Tadeusz Borowski (12 November 1922 – 1 July 1951) was a Polish writer and journalist. His wartime poetry was based in major part on his experiences as a civilian during the Nazi occupation and later he turned to prose as he described his experiences as a prisoner at the Auschwitz and Dachau-Allach death camps. After the camp was liberated in 1945, Borowski ended up in Germany, then Paris and finally returned to Poland in the spring of 1946. He married his longtime love later that year. Three days after she gave birth to their daughter in 1951 and not long after a friend had been captured and tortured by the communists, he committed suicide by breathing in gas from the kitchen stove.

The lights on the ramp flicker with a spectral glow, the wave of people - feverish, agitated, stupefied people - flows on and on, endlessly. They think that now they will have to face a new life in the camp, and they prepare themselves emotionally for the hard struggle ahead. They do not know that in just a few moments they will die, that the gold, money, and diamonds which they have so prudently hidden in their clothing and on their bodies are now useless to them. Experienced professionals will

probe into every recess of their flesh, will pull the gold from under the tongue and the diamonds from the uterus and the colon. They will rip out gold teeth. In tightly sealed crates they will ship them to Berlin.

- Excerpt from **This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Publisher: Penguin Classics; 1976 Penguin Books paperback edition edition (August 1, 1992)

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In April 2011 Venus febriculosa and Dunmore Publishing, Ltd published **THIS WAY: Covering/Uncovering Tadeusz Borowski's This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen**. The book edited by Marco Sonzogni and John Bertram presents a series of essays and submissions for a cover illustration contest for Borowski's collection, examining how such a delicate topic might be tackled through the art of book cover design.

Source: [Penguin USA](#), [Culture.pl](#)

More works by Tadeusz Borowski

Recommended



THIS WAY: Covering/Uncovering Borowski

"This Way" uses Borowski's stories to explore the relationship between verbal and visual representations of war and genocide through analysis of the entries in an international competition for a new cover for Borowski's book. Authors and advisors include noted authorities on Holocaust literature and Holocaust representation.

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